HAPPINESS:

A CHARACTERISTIC POEM.

True Happineſs ſure wanders not Abroad,
It dwells within — dwells with its Parent God!

SPENCER's HERMAS.

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MDCCLXXIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

HAPPINESS.

DEAR, faithful ANN, this humble Verſe receive,
The beſt a weak neglected Muſe can give.
Love, which at firſt thy comely Form inſpir'd,
Grows yet the more, as thou art more admir'd.
The happy Heart can now with Rapture find
How ſweet the Paſſion when with Friendſhip join'd.
Improving Friendſhip! *ſacred* and *ſublime*,
Cements our Union thro' the Change of Time.
Perplexing Cares may needful Eaſe remove,
But ne'er can alter, or deſtroy my Love.
Here in Retirement whilſt I paſs my Days,
Where the glad ſoul her firſt Devotion pays,
The Scenes delightſome, and the Moments free,
Are All beſt reliſh'd when I think on Thee.

Ab-

Abſence like this, with ſmiling Peace improv'd,
Can ſerve to make thy Preſence more belov'd!
Yes, thou art with me, whereſoe'er I go,
Life of my Joy! when Hours ſerenely flow.
Come, with thy Charms my Meditation aid,
Sweet Peace invites thee to the ſilent Shade;
Far from the Din of Crowds, the Glare of Pride,
The Lore of kind Philoſophy ſhall guide:
O come, my Love, each calmful Thought refine,
Receive the Numbers, for the Bard is thine.

DELIGHTSOME now, when after all my Care,
I walk in Fields, and breathe the balmy Air,
Diſcourſe with NATURE in the verdant Shade,
And here forget the vexing Scenes of Trade.
The dire NECESSITIES relinquiſh'd ſeem,
Paſt, or unmeaning, as ſome painful Dream:

All groveling Views the riſing Soul diſdains,
Fair Peace and Plenty bleſs theſe ſylvan Plains.

HERE let us learn, what is it Men divide
From Fame or Honours, Titles, Wealth or Pride!
What all the Idols we ſo much purſue,
Unwilling ſtill to own the Phantoms true.
If only VIRTUE HAPPINESS can give,
Beſt bound our Wiſhes, and contented live.
Their trueſt Bliſs, the wiſeſt Mortals find
When rich and great in Harmony of Mind!
Whence ſprung our Folly? In what fatal Hour?
That few embrace it, when 'tis in their Power.
To wild Purſuits, the erring MOST betake,
And leave the Subſtance for the Shadow's Sake.

O'ER the wide World the battelling Monarch goes,
Ambition fires him, and creates him Foes;

Each Conqueſt, glorious in the vulgar Name,
Allures his Paſſion with a noiſy Fame;
Triumphal Spoils, his hardy Deeds acquire,
The Hero riſes, and the World admire.
But who, in ſober Thought, can Acts prefer,
That ſpread the dire Calamities of War,
That feed the Source of Miſery and Strife,
Perverting ſtill the true Deſign of Life?
The Mind, ingenuous, muſt the Reaſons blame,
Howe'er the MOST may judge, or KINGS may claim.
Wealth, Honours, Titles, barbarous War may gain,
But leave a Sting, that Pride itſelf muſt pain.
Thrones and Dominion, Victory may bring,
But from the Prize what dreadful Ills may ſpring!
In VIRTUE reſts the Glory of a Crown,
The Heighth of Life! the Splendor of Renown!
Without a Heart religiouſly inclin'd,
To guard the Peace, and Freedom of Mankind; The

The mightieſt Monarch, midſt his awful Power,
Can yet no certain Happineſs ſecure;
Unmeaning all the Pageantry of Show;
His boaſted Labours beſt forgot below!

If then the FIRST in Pride, the FIRST in Fame,
So poor a Recompence from Theſe can claim;
What are the Views which ſecond Orders lead,
Who muſt but triumph as the Firſt ſucceed?
Wealth, Honours, Titles, lift the Fancy high,
But ne'er can want of *Moral-Worth* ſupply.
From *Moral-Worth*, the conſcious Heart will know,
The trueſt Wealth, and nobleſt Honours flow;
And theſe Bequeſts no mortal State can bound,
Sure in the Cottage, as the Palace found:
Impartial Gift of the Eternal Mind,
True *Moral-Worth*, which All that ſeek ſhall find.

Why ſighs the Boſom for Diſtinction's Train,
When what the mighty GREAT can boaſt, is vain?
Falſe is the Triumph of the Sons of Pride,
Falſe ev'ry Joy, where VIRTUE does not guide.

FROM Ranks ſo high, the willing Muſe deſcends
To more familiar Life, and ſocial Friends;
Where humbler Stations more inviting ſeem,
Safe from the Dangers of the wild Extream.
Yet here, how oft miſtaken Notions riſe?
What Numbers waver, ſcorning to be wiſe?
Some Bubble ſtill the wandering Fancy draws,
To court from Self-conceit a falſe Applauſe.
What changeleſs Nature never meant to be
Invention forms, in ſtrange Diverſity.
Deluded Men, forſaking Virtue's Rules,
Delight to croud the motley Stage of Fools.

GUILDO, the Proud, whom ſounding Titles bind,
Perverſly ſtrives to lord it o'er his Kind:
In the fair Land, where happieſt Freedom reigns,
He'd patient ſee uſurping Power and Chains;
The Balance that protects, with Zeal deſtroy'd,
Were but his own Ambition ſatisfied·
Alike his Manners, in each rude Exceſs,
In all the Farce of Equipage and Dreſs:
Theſe to ſupport, thro' all the various Scenes,
He cloſely meditates, nor ſtops at Means;
Tries the nice Range of faſhionable Art,
Nor heeds who ſuffer—he muſt act his Part!
His Debts of Honour, he *perhaps* may pay,
But leaves the lawful to a later Day.
Laws which he help'd to make, and ſhould defend,
He can diſpenſe with, if to ſerve his End;

If from the *Greater-World* the Thing's conceal'd,
No matter to the *Leſs* how much reveal'd:
That, has alone the Right or Power to blame,
This, muſt not cenſure, even in the Name.
But Pride or Envy, can the Man create?
Happier the Peaſant than this Thing of State.

WHO ſees not Rancour in its ugliеſt Forms,
When angry BUFFOLUS or frowns, or ſtorms?
His Hundred Thouſands glaring on his Mind,
Turn the Man *Fool*, to Moderation blind.
To him, unwieldy Wealth's a curſt Diſeaſe,
Eſtates he buys, but not one Moment's Peace.
His ſtubborn Will, no Reaſon can controul,
Dark in his wilful Gloomyneſs of Soul:
His Temper, riſing at each trivial Thing,
Declares the emblematic *Hell* within.

Af-

Affronted once, to worſt Revenge he flies,
Nor heeds the Widow's, or the Orphan's Cries.
His Word to Honour, nor to Faith confin'd,
He plights amain, but Laws can *ſcarcely* bind.
Commanding-Gold the wiſh'd Protection gives,
And while from Juſtice ſafe, at large he lives.
If Chance directs him to a Deed-Benign,
The Public trace it from ſome low Deſign,
Some ſelfiſh Profit, in collat'ral View,
So Praiſe deny, nor deem even Thanks his due.
Deeds, which might raiſe a Multitude to Fame,
Scarce bring to BUFFOLUS a decent Name.
By Kinſmen hated, by Dependants fear'd,
By None, who rightly know his Heart, rever'd.
Who calls him happy, means but to deride,
More bleſt the Beggar, than ſuch Bears of Pride.

MENTO, diſtinguiſh'd in the ſacred Call,
Might think it happy, wou'd he think at all.
Bred in the Maxims that beſt teach to live,
In all the Learning ancient Books can give.
An higher Pitch in Science few can reach,
Endow'd with Talents, and the Skill to preach.
Kind Patrons too have crown'd his affluent Fate,
More than ſufficient in the pious State;
Yet weakly leaning to the wild Extremes,
Unſatisfy'd, or unreſolv'd he ſeems.
His Doctrine, worthy of the public Voice,
But low'ring Pride its beſt Effects deſtroys.
With narrow Thoughts, unſocial Humours join,
And in the *Mortal* ſink the *Man-Divine*.
Coward, when Juſtice calls him to be bold,
Without a Bluſh, he ſees her Mercy ſold;

A little Intereſt can her Pains divide,
The Laws neglected, turn on Folly's Side.
Inferior Orders, whom his Power might ſway,
He lets with wrong Examples idly ſtray;
Too common now, among the Tribes to find
Looſe Folly's Sons, of every various kind!
Yet MENTO wonders at the Changes made,
Wonders why Schiſm ſhou'd the Church invade!
How dignify'd ſo e'er the Man may be,
I think him wrong; and ſo do more than me.
Wiſer the Indian on the furtheſt Pole,
With all his fancied Ignorance of Soul;
Happier the Druids, on our native Shore,
Who liv'd conſiſtent, for they knew no more.

IN bounteous Days, by good ACASTO fed,
Obſcure SERVETIO rais'd his drooping Head;

Long, rightly mindful of his former State,
The Man was humble, and had No One's Hate;
All wish'd him well, his Merit claim'd their Praise;
Kind Friendship bleſt him in a thouſand Ways.
But when from Dung, the murky Vapours riſe,
They lag in Air; too groſs to reach the Skies.
So mean SERVETIO ne'er attain'd the Plan
That forms the Model of an *Honeſt Man*:
Though chang'd in Manners, and capricious Fame,
His narrow-thinking Mind is ſtill the ſame.
Riſing imperious from the Steward's Board,
He apes the Grandeur of his better Lord;
Pompous Commands the Creature's Will declare,
Harſh where he rules, oppreſſive where he dare:
To riſing Merit a moſt deadly Foe,
Baſely forgetful whence his Riches flow!
Hard Taſk to ſay (his Heart ſo various toſt)
If Pride, or Vanity direct him moſt:

Like the Tom Fool, on arch Emperick's Stage,
The Means of Laughter, more than ſerious Rage.
Some Few, perhaps, may think the Mortal bleſt,
I envy not — let Silence mark the Reſt.
To me, more happy ſeems poor DAMON's Lot,
Tho' nearly ſtarving, by the *Great* forgot.

SUCH Characters in public Life are found,
They will in this, and ev'ry Age, abound.
Not but the Muſe can better Contraſts give,
Who follow VIRTUE, and who know to live;
Who rightly weighing what the World purſue,
Reject the Falſe, and *dare* embrace the True.

See learn'd PALÆMON, in his Conſcience clear,
How greatly Rich, with *Eighty Pounds* a year!
So wiſely prudent with the moderate Store,
He bounds Ambition, and he aſks no more.

One Half, the Bounty of his RECTOR brings,
Who leaves the Cure for more diſtinguiſh'd Things,
Midſt higher Life, and pompous Scenes to ſtay;
Eyeing Preferment in the courtly Way.
The Reſt, fair Art and Induſtry attain,
To Friends no Burthen, to himſelf no Pain.
Calm, and conſiſtent, in each virtuous Rule,
With zealous Care he guards his Church and School.
Truths, which at Church his pious Texts impoſe,
His good Example more emphatic ſhews.
At School, each Youth, by eaſy Precepts taught,
Advances chearful in improving Thought;
The Maſter's Love he ſeeks; and ſoon inclin'd,
Grows eager for the well-inſtructed Mind.
At Home, behold his blooming Offspring riſe,
His kind OPHELIA and their mutual Joys.
What Health and Plenty crown their humble State?
Fair Peace attending, makes the whole complete.

By all the Parish he so well receiv'd,
Beloved, rev'renc'd, honour'd, and believ'd.
His daily Acts, their Force benign extend,
Their kind Physician, Counsel, Priest, and Friend!
If any Fortune we may term divine,
The Happiness, Palæmon, sure is thine!
The Christian Conduct, which thou dar'st maintain,
Best guards Religion from the Proud and Vain.
To others leave the faulty love of Sway,
To dream their lazy, deedless Life, away.

THE good RYOLTO, virtuously inclin'd,
Enjoys the Pleasures of a peaceful Mind.
Endow'd with all the Knowledge of the Great,
Politest Manners, and a large Estate;
From these he seeks not for the Bliss we own;
He feels it perfect in himself alone!

Plain in his Dreſs; his Table Temperance rules,
Reverſe of Fops, and Epicurean Fools.
No ratling Equipage diſturbs his Gate,
He takes no Pleaſure in the *Noiſe* of State.
Frugal he ſeems to all the aſpiring Gay,
But wherefore ſaves he? to give more away.
Thouſands, whilſt ſome for narrow Meaneſs hoard,
And others ſquander at the Gaming Board;
To Charity, his generous Hand can give,
That Worth (in Want) may ſmile! the Wretched live!
Right Uſe of Riches, is his favourite Theme;
Reaſon attends him prompting ev'ry Scheme.
Each liberal Act a laſting Comfort proves,
The ſweeteſt Reliſh to the Peace he loves!
That Peace, in Search of which ſuch Numbers roam
His Wiſdom finds, and beſt ſecures at *Home*.

Hail,

Hail, happy Man! ſo perfect in your Ways,
I muſt not envy, but I dare to praiſe.

If leaving Men, our fair Enquiry trace
The various Tempers of your ſofter Race;
We find the *Moſt*, with Juſtice to complain,
How long they've ſought for *Happineſs* in vain.
What Numbers mark at laſt the groſs Miſtake,
When Love and Gaiety their Years forſake.
'Tis *then* they own, with Anguiſh and Surpriſe,
That Happineſs from Diſſipation flies.
But whilſt in Youth, to raſh Purſuits they run,
Nor heed the Contraſts of a ſetting Sun.
Charms which can *then* our warmeſt Love engage,
Shou'd be ſucceeded by Eſteem in Age;
And this Eſteem, what Ornaments can raiſe,
Like Truth and Virtue, ſought in youthful Days?

These will be found to Bliss the *surest* Road,
In spite of Figure, or capricious Mode.
Nor Courts, nor Equipage the Gem confine,
Nor aught that gayest Fashion terms divine.

POLITE IMMELIA, beautiful and young,
Whose early Praise was heard from every Tongue;
Her Form, adorn'd with every rising Grace,
With all the Sweetness of the fairest Face;
Train'd in Accomplishments, genteel and gay,
What highest Birth cou'd wish, or Art display;
Without a Dowre, to bid the Rich revere,
Was join'd by HYMEN to a youthful PEER;
And might have liv'd on Earth the happiest Fair,
Had Truth and Virtue been vouchsaf'd her Care.
But lo, unwilling to be *early* wise,
Thro' Folly's Wilds with rash Pursuit she flies.

Cards,

Cards, Routs, and Balls, her dancing Thoughts divide,
No Pomp of Show, no Luxury deny'd!
For Pleaſure, ſtill contriv'd the Noble Dame,
But vain ſhe ſought—True Pleaſure never came.
Short Term of Years prolong'd her mortal Pride,
The *Venus* droop'd, and diſcontented died.
Small Traces of her Memory remain,
But one *Memento* to the Proud and Vain.

FAR other Maxims ſway'd her Siſter's Mind;
Charming CORDELIA was to Truth inclin'd.
Bleſt as IMMELIA with a Beauty's Fame,
A DUKE her Conſort, and renown'd her Name,
Acquainted well with what the *Grand* admire,
In ſplendid Life, Politeneſs, and Attire.
State and Appearance, which ſhe was to ſhare,
Scarce deem'd Amuſements, much beneath her Care.

No Riches wanting every Wiſh to crown,
To boaſted Families and Titles known;
But better Wealth the happier DUTCHESS ſought,
Her nobleſt Affluence, Rectitude of Thought!
To Deeds of Charity divinely given,
She dealt her Bounties as the Hand of Heaven.
Diſtreſs, from her, a certain Friend wou'd find;
The Poor were conſcious ſhe was always kind.
To Induſtry ſhe brought deſerted Youth,
Their Minds illumin'd with the Lights of Truth,
To tame the Ignorant, ſhe ſtrove with Zeal,
To make them uſeful to the Public-Weal.
From honeſt Hearts ſhe laſting Praiſe receives,
And bleſt, and bleſſing, ſtill the Charmer lives.
Maternal Cares a ſhining Offſpring claim,
To ſhare her Beauty, and acquire her Fame.

What

What prudent Fair, who will theſe Lines peruſe,
Can ſilent heſitate which Lot to chuſe?
At firſt, of equal Fortune; equal Praiſe;
Now, good CORDELIA brighter Luſtres raiſe:
Supremely happy, not from Views of State,
But that her Soul is ſo *divinely* great!

SEE, fall'n CORINNA, through her Vail of Pride,
With foul Adultery, leering by her Side;
Camelion Folly, lending variaunt Aid,
And Impudence, in wanton Garb diſplay'd,
What though to-day, expell'd from Hymen's Fane,
To-morrow, ſhe can trip the Bride again.
Divorc'd, diſhonour'd,—mindleſs of the Fall,
Tinct hides the Bluſh, and ſhe can laugh at All.
What if a ——— is this ſo *ſtrange* a Sound?
She only points the Faſhionable Round!

Eyes the Beau-Mond, in ſplendid Circles ſhown,
And hails her Stars—*ſhe ſinks not quite alone.*
Of what Avail, that Shape? that winning Air?
Thoſe Eyes! that Face? or all the Graces there?
Ah! what avails her Birth, or Fortune's Store?
Why princely Titles, which the Crowds adore?
In Youth how chaſte, how honour'd, how belov'd!
Her happy Manners, noticed and approv'd!
Alas, ev'n *prudent Education* fail'd;
Virtue diſown'd—alluring Vice prevail'd.
Can *Happineſs* ſuch mortal Conduct bind?
'Tis all Deluſion—emptier than the Wind.
If Life remain, on Earth the Truth ſhe'll prove,
When paſt her Years of Jollity and Love.

WHAT different Colours gild FIDÆLIA's Name,
She ſhines diſtinguiſh'd by the pureſt Fame.

With-

Without a Cauſe, deſerted by her *Lord*,
Lude Strumpets call'd to ſhare his Bed and Board.
From the chaſte Wife his Blaze of Paſſion turns,
His Heart, corrupt, for meaner Objects burns.
Nor Length of Years cou'd right Reflection bring,
He blindly ſtray'd till Death ſhut out the Scene.
How Angel like, the vile Affront *ſhe* bore,
Her prudent Conduct blameleſs as before.
Her Soul, ſtill perfect in the true Sublime,
Grows more embrightened thro' the Change of Time.
In ſilver'd Age, whilſt gently Life declines,
One fair Example to the Sex ſhe ſhines:
In Virtue old! in Virtue *nobly* brave!
Such *Happineſs* muſt reach beyond the Grave.

Poor ſimple Guly, whom her *Maſter* wed;
What high Ideas fill'd the Virgin's Head,

Of Riches, Gentry, and a *Lady*'s Name,
When from his Mouth the firſt Propoſals came?
All former Vows were cancell'd with Diſdain,
Soon ſhe forgot her *Collin* of the Plain,
Left him, alas, in other Sort to turn,
To hate her Falſehood, or his Loſs to mourn.
But when elate the *Madam* ſhone away,
In all that follow'd from her Wedding Day;
Thro' Viſits, Paſtimes, Complaiſance, was hurl'd,
And all the Changes of the *Genteel-World*;
How loſt, and diſappointed did ſhe ſeem,
When Time awak'd her from the fairy Dream?
For *Happineſs*, which there ſhe thought to gain,
She ſighs, and owns her Search had been in vain.
Dear former Scenes, her Fancy warm renews;
She thinks of COLLIN, and her ſlighted Vows:

Him

Him, married now, ſhe finds in plain Degree,
Content and chearful, happier far than ſhe.
Unknown to Equals in her humble State,
Huff'd by the Taunts of the remembering Great;
Whiſper'd Reflections on her former Name,
Her Huſband cooling from his loveſick Flame;
All this ſhe weighs, in Notions right or wrong,
And ſilent hopes her Life will not be long.

NOT ſo IULINDA, whom the Good revere,
Whom All acknowledge with Reſpect ſincere.
For HAPPINESS, ſhe took the prudent Part,
She gave her Fortune where ſhe gave her Heart.
Whilſt kind ADULMO warm Addreſſes paid,
Advance of Riches bleſs'd the blooming Maid;
Such as might Figure in the World maintain,
Or any Match in *Titled-Stations* gain.

But this in Her no Alteration wrought;
She'd other Proffers, but ſhe ſcorn'd the Thought;
To kind ADULMO ſhe had paſs'd the Vow,
She lik'd his Manners, and ſhe'd found him true.
No Heſitation cou'd Intent remove,
They married; and are bleſt with happieſt Love.
Her generous Act, the ſure Foundation laid
Of HAPPINESS, in laſting Peace diſplay'd.
In Scenes polite, no wild Exceſs they ſhew,
In the juſt Medium ſtudious ſtill to go.
Free from Profuſion, Vanity, and Strife;
Diſtinguiſh'd in the Decencies of Life.
Cauſe of their Bliſs, who have Deſire to know,
Will find the whole from Love of Virtue flow;
And not from Aught inſtable Chance may give,
Their honour'd Station, or their Means to live.

THUS,

THUS, my lov'd ANNA, when the World we view,
The *Moral-Eye* diſcerns the Falſe from True;
Convincing more, from juſt Survey of Things,
That HAPPINESS from no Poſſeſſions ſprings.
The True, and Perfect, we can only find
In ſocial, laſting Harmony of Mind,
Which VIRTUE and her Deeds *alone* beſtow,
Our nobleſt Wiſh, our ſureſt Guide below;
'Tis what the Poor may feel, the Rich muſt own,
And All acknowledge in themſelves alone.
In Life's mean Buſtle, what the *Numbers* boaſt,
Are merely Trifles, or in Trifles loſt.
What Pride, what Envy, ſmall Diſtinctions raiſe,
In every Claſs of theſe our modern Days?
But happieſt they who quit the Public Shows,
For humbler Scenes which right Retreat beſtows;

With *bounded* Wiſhes, and with Hearts ſincere,
From wrong Ambition, as from Envy clear.
To them Experience will the Truth reveal,
And each ſerenely-chearful Boſom feel.

OFT have I thought, how bleſt the Man muſt be,
Who dwells on Plains, with harmleſs Liberty;
Whoſe Fortune can the decent Things beſtow,
But Nought to tempt to Luxury or Show!
His Houſehold-Cares, to eaſy Compaſs brought,
For fit Employment, and no Bar to Thought.
Yes, I have eye'd *his* Lot, with fair Deſign,
And fondly wiſh'd ſuch Happineſs were mine.

WITH Health, and Thou, Dear Anna, ſtill my own,
No more ſeems wanting Mortal-Wiſh to crown.
Such kind Completion of the earthly Store,
Wou'd ſmooth our Paſſage to the happier Shore;

Each

Each anxious Doubt of thorny Care remove,
And beſt ſecure that balmy Peace I love:
The Rural Scenes the fit Retirement give,
Each fleeting Hour wou'd teach us how to live:
Together, we'd prepare for Change on High,
Rejoic'd to live, and not afraid to die.

BUT let not theſe *Ideal Views* deſtroy,
Or aught diminiſh what I have of Joy!
Amidſt the Gloom of complicated Cares,
The pleaſing *Dawn of Happineſs* appears;
Supremely happy if the *Boon* be given,
If not, I reſt me in the Will of Heaven.
With Reſolution let me *work* my Part,
And try the Scale of Induſtry and Art;
Glad if Endeavours ſhou'd at Length prevail,
Nor yet *dejected* tho' they chance to fail.

The E N D.

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